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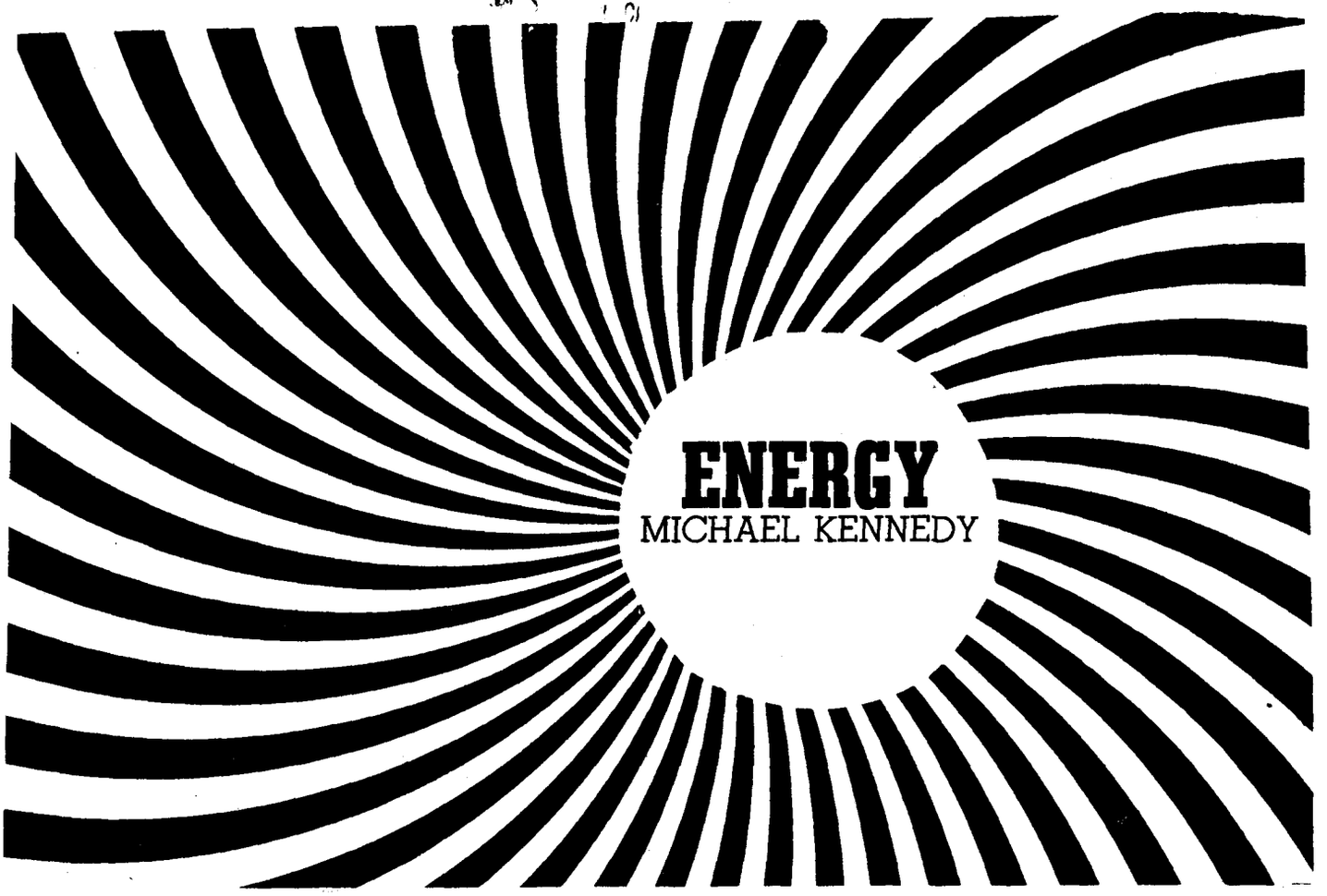

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NEWS & VIEWS

Nixon's Apologist

Presidential speech writer, Father John McLaughlin, S.J., appeared in New York recently on his mission on behalf of Richard Nixon. Among McLaughlin's gems:

"I think Nixon will be viewed historically and in his own time as a great moral leader. . . .

"There is nothing sinister in arranging one's affairs to minimize taxes. There is no compulsion to pay more than you owe. . . .

"A priest's role is to heal. I think Nixon is working to heal the country and I am working to heal the country. . . ."

About the same time syndicated columnist Philip Nobile ("Uncommon Conversations") was interviewing Father McLaughlin about his mission. Nobile's introduction to that interview:

"The dictionary defines 'Jesuitical' as 'crafty, cunning, equivocal.' Father McLaughlin is certainly all that in defense of the President. I have never heard a more benevolent explanation of the Watergate mess. Charity begins at home, but McLaughlin abuses the virtue by whitewashing the entire affair.

"An exasperated Gore Vidal recently tried to put McLaughlin in his place by quoting him the last words of Cardinal Wolsey, the doormat prelate who covered up for the excesses of England's Henry VIII. 'If only I had served my God,' Wolsey lamented, 'as well as I have served my king.'

"Father McLaughlin abhors the comparison. 'My conscience is my own,' he told me. 'I haven't put it in an envelope for any man's keeping.' But you wouldn't know the difference from listening to his Apologia for Richard Nixon."

Nobile asked McLaughlin why he was so convinced of Nixon's innocence. The answer was right out of *Alice in Wonderland*:

"I know from the President's demeanor, his habitual thinking regarding matters of ethical significance, his deference to people, his determination to leave lesser details to others and others to keep these details from him—the confluence of these factors leads me to that conclusion of the President's innocence."

Dissent & Dissidents

Soviet scientist Andrei Sakharov suggested a six-point program to aid the cause of dissidents in the USSR, in a message to the Feb. 1 dinner of Social Democrats, U.S.A.

After citing arrests, interrogations and searches of dissidents, religious persecutions, harassment of writers, obstacles to free emigration and discrimination against national minorities, Sakharov urged:

1. A campaign for free access by the representatives of the International Red Cross and World Health Organization to inspect the Soviet places of incarcerations and mental hospitals.

2. A campaign for amnesty of Soviet political prisoners. ("I should like to call to mind once again such glorious names as Vladimir Bukovsky, Peter Grigorenko, Semen Gluzman, Valentin Moroz, Leonid Pliushch, Vladimir Borisov, and Yuri Shikhanovitch. A great number of other names should be added to this list.")

3. A campaign to end discrimination against such national minorities as the Crimean Tartars, Germans of the Volga area and the Turk-Meskhs.

4. A campaign for freedom of emigration.

5. A campaign to defend Solzhenitsyn, linked with free distribution of his book in the USSR. (Our official propaganda insists that the crimes described in *The Gulag Archipelago* have already been condemned. But it is necessary to consistently emphasize that if for the typing of this manuscript persons are to be imprisoned, then a cover-up and even support of the crimes will be expressed, rather than their condemnation.")

6. A campaign to defend all the honest writers who have been harassed, including Galich, Maksimov, Chukovskaya, Nekrasov, Marchenko, Amalrik and many others.

Anti-Abortion Scene

Anti-abortion people — some at least—are hopping mad over the way media covered their activities of Jan. 22, the anniversary of the Supreme Court ruling on abortion.

Right-To-Life News, out of Scarsdale, N.Y., charged that "miniscule" pro-abortion demonstrations at St. Patrick's Cathedral and the office of Senator Buckley "took precedent over the massive Washington rally."

(The adjective may be inflated. *Right-To-Life News* estimated the rally crowd at "about 16,000"; diocesan newspapers at 20,000; New York's three daily newspapers at from 5,000 to 6,000.)

Right-To-Life News also protested the prominence given the arrest of a man in Albany for seizing a sign from four pro-abortionists. "No mention in the *Times* or *Daily News*," according to *Right-To-Life News*, "that these four screaming women were in a restricted speakers' zone on the steps of the state capitol building, that police didn't remove them until the photographer got her (sic) picture, or that they kept interruptng the program while a pro-abortion minister told why he became pro-life after working for the Clergy Counseling (abortion referral) Service."

Behrendt, *Het Parool*, Amsterdam

Odds and Ends

—The Senate has once again refused to ratify the UN convention outlawing genocide, approved by a General Assembly vote of 55 to 0 way back in 1948. Heading up opposition to the pact this time 'round: Senator James Allen of Alabama and Senator Sam J. Ervin, Jr., of North Carolina.

—Quote of the Week Award to Father James M. Demske, S.J., president of Canisius College, after the campus newspaper featured a centerfold "nude" drawing of him: "I think, under the circumstances, I have the right of redress."

— One-upping Auden: Lewis Strauss, former chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission and once Secretary of Commerce, who died recently, left a codicil to his will directing that his gun collection in his estate at Brandy Station, Va., be destroyed.

JOHN DEEDY

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CORRESPONDENCE

S'il vous plait

Englewood, Colo.

To the Editors: Dennis Hale [Jan. 25] would have one believe he is bewildered by women's lib. However, if he will *permit* me to bring it to his attention, he clearly betrays his male chauvinism when he says, "Are men to become more like women? Or are men supposed *to allow* women to become more like men?"

MARGARET A. SCHONEBAUM

Reverent Cliches?

Newton Centre. Mass.

To the Editors: Michael Murray's scornful account of Public Broadcasting Service's "Religious America" [Jan. 18] is typical of the intellectual's ignorance and even fear of religious experience. He seems not to know that without religious experience no religious movement, Christian, Jewish, Moslem, or Buddhist, would ever have been started. Also, without periodic infusions of experience neither individual nor institutional expressions of religion will survive desiccation. This does not mean that either religious experience or intellectualism are without their dangers nor that all ecstatic expressions of religion are equally effective and wholesome. It does mean that both the rational and the nonrational have their places in a total religious program if one expects religion to have that impact on life that Mr. Murray correctly desires.

If he studies either Pentecostalism or the religious commune movement he will find an impact on the lives of participants just as powerful as with Hasidic Judaism, of which he seems to approve. For if religion is not a passion it tends to be little more than a dull routine of religious respectability and does not long outlast its alienation from ecstasy. Here William James was better informed.

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THE SILENT CRISIS

Poignant underscoring of what has come to be known as the silent crisis —food, its availability and its cost—is provided by an item in Dorothy Day's column in the current *Catholic Worker*. The item is built around a memorandum from Ed Forand, a Catholic Worker aide who several days a week makes the soup that daily nourishes hundreds of the poor at the Catholic Worker's kitchen at 36 East 1st St., New York City, 10003. "Up to a short time ago," Mr. Forand reported, "we could, for approximately $30, get 300 lbs. of beans, lentils or split peas. This same lot costs us now anywhere from $180 to at least $200. The beans and so forth sold in the retail stores would cost a few cents more each pound than we paid for them by buying in 100-lb. bags—but in either case the inflationary increase amounts to not 2 percent or even 10 percent, but to 500 or 600 percent."

Mr. Forand's is a small example, but it points up a large fact: the price of food is skyrocketing, partially because of increasing demands, partially because of diminishing supplies; and as always it is the poor and the hungry who get hurt first and the most. The affluent, now as ever, can buy what they need—in fact, can demand the choicest food supplies at the expense of the production and marketing of staples like the beans that form the dietary foundation for the Catholic Worker's poor. The plight of the poor remains as invisible as ever it was.

Senator Edward Kennedy has sought to prod the Nixon Administration into formulating a responsible food policy that would not only see to the poor and hungry of America, but that would also meet humanitarian obligations in areas of the globe now faced with starvation. His logic is indisputable: "Americans have now been awakened to the limits of energy, but in the final analysis the inconvenience of an empty gas tank pales in comparison to the prospect of empty food bins."

The response of the Nixon Administration to reminders such as his has not been encouraging. In recent years food has become a major factor in the nation's balance-of-payment picture, and the Administration does not seem of a mind to upset the money flow resulting from the sales of food to those in a position to pay for it. The U.S. is currently exporting the produce of more than 80 million acres, equivalent to nearly 30 percent of

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harvested cropland, the bulk of that going to countries like Russia, China and Japan. (Meat exports to Japan alone doubled between 1971 and 1972.) This policy helps keep the developed world as well fed as before, maybe even better fed. But in the underdeveloped world—particularly West Africa, Ethiopia and South Asia—it translates to more and more people eating less and less.

Senator Kennedy is urging the establishment of a world food bank, the protection of energy sources for food, a food-for-peace program, and the quickening of food-relief efforts. The Nixon Administration counters by pointing to the peak grain crop planned for this planting season. The fine print, however, makes plain that this crop is intended to check beef prices (a staple of the affluent, not the poor) and allay talk of the U.S. having to buy back grains it sold Russia at what are now embarrassing, give-away prices. The poor and the hungry are likely to be no better off once the crops are in than they are now.

The Nixon food policy, in a word, leaves the "silent crisis" still muted and, by its social orientation, more critical than ever, since food reserves allow the slimmest of margins for miscalculation or vagaries of weather. Mr. Kennedy says that the world's food situation is "entirely at the mercy of this year's weather." He may overstate. But the possibility that he could be wrong is nothing over which to gamble.

THE NEW PENANCE

The recent modification of the Sacrament of Penance is another example of church authorities taking a half-step in the right direction—possibly too late for it to do much good.

For several reasons, the old confessional boxes have been empty for years. People have lost a clear-cut notion of what sin is; and this new sense of the ambiguity of evil does not fit the popular understanding of confession. Furthermore, Christians trained for generations to submit themselves to the judgment of the priest have gained a sense of their moral autonomy and now hesitate to kneel in darkness before a faceless voice behind a screen. Meanwhile Rome has squandered its own moral authority by enforcing *Humanae Vitae*, while merely wringing its hands over the Vietnam war and the scandalous inequitable distribution of the world's and the church's own resources.

The new regulations simply accept some changes that took place in religious houses, universities and progressive parishes years ago; but, by now, the communal penance services, which still require the penitent to confess serious sins individually to the priest, have already begun to fade.

What the church needs is a policy that respects the Christian's freedom to decide whether to confess his sins individually or to have them forgiven through general absolution in a communal rite. The sacrament should not be a court of law. Meanwhile, along with individual face-to-face confessions, it would also be good to encourage families and friends to confess as a group. Now too the liturgists and social scientists have a new challenge: creating brief communal ceremonies that dramatically remind us of our shared sinfulness, our responsibilities for the suffering of the world, and the reality of God's forgiveness.

A PRINTER'S DEVIL

A printer's devil did Satanic injustice to the *Commonweal* editorial of Feb. 22, "Begone, Satan!" The editorial should have concluded as follows:

"It should be clear, as a Georgetown chaplain said in the *Georgetown Voice* [January 22], 'We've been had.' They have, alas, helped sew together and set free a little Frankenstein monster of their own which, like the misguided doctor of Karlstadt, they should hasten to disown."

An Election That Will Solve Nothing

By the time you read this, the British government will have decided whether or not to have a 'snap' general election. Talk of an imminent election—say in early February—is proliferating even while all the politicians agree that it would solve nothing. Naturally the Labor party has to proclaim that it would welcome one, but I doubt whether it really does. The chances are that the Conservatives would win an election held now. However hard the opposition tried, it would be almost impossible not to fight the election on the government's chosen battleground: namely "Who runs Britain?—the elected government or the trade union bosses?" I doubt if people are in the mood for a serious weighing-up of all the current problems. They are likely to vote—if they are given the chance—on the narrow issues of "unions versus the national interest" and "which party is most likely to cure our economic ills?" In other words, the election would be decided on whether it seems more important to control prices (which the Labor Party is pledged to do by controls and subsidies) or to control the unions (presumably by further Tory legal and other squeezes on their freedom of industrial action). Since the Conservatives seem more likely to

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ersevere in the second than the Labor party is to ucceed in the first, and given the general disillusionnent with political rhetoric, I would bet on a Conser-'ative win.

However, the really interesting point is that, as everyone admits, such a victory would solve nothing of importance. The likely result of a Conservative victory on a "Union-bashing" ticket would be further bitterness and an exacerbation of the conflict between the organized working class and the middle classes—symbolized by the much-harassed London professional commuters. The Right in Britain cannot tame the trade union movement: it simply lacks the power. But similarly, the trade union movement is too divided, and there are many working people outside it, to get its way fully against a hostile government. Stalemate is therefore the only long-term result, unless external forces wholly outside the control of either side come in to change the balance radically one way or the other.

But if the result of a Conservative victory will be stalemate, the result of a Labor victory would be no better. A Labor government, like any other, would have to resist much of the current union pressure, while at the same time it would probably be forced to give way in such a manner as to make the economic problems worse. Furthermore, much of the problem results from factors over which a government, of whichever complexion, has no power: namely inter-union rivalries stemming from profound and long-standing historical causes and foreign influences over the basic elements of the economy.

The lesson to be learned from this log-jam seems to me to be that we are now being forced to face the fact that Britain is not nearly as democratic a society as we have been taught to believe. Democracy, we have been taught, consists in having the power, through free and universal suffrage, of choosing (from a very limited menu) the kind of government we want, both nationally and locally. But what we now have to understand is that this choice means very little in the absence of democratic control of most of the rest of our social existence. If a general election can solve none of the basic problems that today go to make up the worst crisis in Britain since the war, then it is obvious that the picture of democracy that we have been presented with is radically distorted.

However, it is easier to say this than to know exactly what to do about it. The rhetoric which urges us to extend democratic control to all areas of life is attractive: but it is hardly possible to imagine what a society built on that principle would look like, or even whether it is possible at all. The deficiencies of the present set-up are obvious. To take just one recent case. The decision that the miners should not be paid for time spent getting dressed for work and having showers afterwards—which seemed one way out of the present deadlock over their pay-claim—was taken by a mysterious entity called the "Pay Board," which is a piece of quasi-legal machinery set up by the government to interpret the laws laid down in the current attempt to control incomes. At the time it looked as though everybody, including *the government*, wanted the Pay Board to say that enough money *could* be given, for this time spent in the pit-area, to solve the problem: but a bunch of civil servants, hamstrung by the law, said it was impossible.

But when we have said all this, it remains to be asked what sort of genuine democratic control can be imagined in which such situations, or others equally problematic would not occur? "Workers' control" is an attractive proposition, and probably an absolute necessity for the future: but I don't think it would solve the basic problems of conflict in a complex capitalist industrial society. For the fact surely is that there is a basic incompatibility between democratic control and any large-scale and glaring inequality in society. We have tried to create a society dedicated simultaneously to the propositions of democracy and of economic "equal opportunity"—which means, of course, opportunity to gain at the expense of others. (What the unions are doing is simply pushing the "equal opportunity" idea to its logical conclusion.) But nobody—not even the deferentially-minded poor of Britain—is going to *vote* for his own social or economic inferiority. Yet this is just what the combination of these two mutually incompatible propositions means. In the end, everyone—including trade unions theoretically dedicated to socialism—will have to decide which is more important: equal opportunity for themselves in a competitive society *or* the extension of democratic control as the guiding principle of social and economic existence.

BRIAN WICKER

Closing the Circle In Brazil

Brazilian bishops who dare to oppose the regime are finding themselves increasingly isolated from their people. Dom Helder Camara, called the voice of the voiceless people of the Third World, has been effectively silenced in his own country. Now Dom Paulo Arns of São Paulo city is getting the same treatment. On November 1st Radio "Nove de Julho," his chief means of communication with the three million Catholics of his huge Archdiocese, was closed by Presidential decree.

In 1954 the city celebrated the Fourth Centenary of its founding. The organizing committee had at its disposal a transmitting station called Nove de Julho (Ninth of July). The following year the government offered

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these wave-lengths to the Archdiocese. Since that time Radio Nove de Julho has become the second most popular of the 119 Catholic broadcasting stations in the country (Radio Aparecida, run by the Redemptorists at the famous shrine, has more listeners). Its schedule, running daily from 6 A.M. to midnight, includes eight major religious programs, augmented by seven special weekend programs. The Archbishop (he was made Cardinal in March of last year) personally records the three daily "Angelus" programs, and his "Encounter with the Pastor" on Saturdays at 5.30 P.M. was especially popular.

The medium-wave transmissions covered the entire State of São Paulo (pop. 20 millions) and several nearby states while the short-wave transmissions were listened to all over Brazil and even farther afield. Brazilians are a very radio-conscious people. Television is still a novelty, beyond the reach of 80 percent of the population but the sight of a "cabocle" hoeing weeds with his transistor beside him is quite common. In this immense country of 100 million inhabitants with only 10,000 priests, radio is the only regular link with the Church in many areas, urban and rural. Padre Vitor of Radio Aparecida and Padre Zezinho of Nove de Julho are familiar friends of many a one who never visited Aparecida do Norte or São Paulo; more important figures than their pastor or bishop and more loved.

Early last year it was decreed that all non-government radio stations must renew their wave-length concessions. The voluminous documentation presented by Nove de Julho was declared "exemplary" by officials of the Federal Ministries of Communications, Labor and Revenue. Ministry of Internal Security had no complaints. However, on October 30th two decrees signed by the President (thus admitting no appeal) declared void the 20-year-old short- and medium-wave concessions. The station was closed the following day. No reason was given. Everybody *knows* (but nobody is saying) that the reason is political. Church sources are left with the onus of *proving* that Nove de Julho poses no threat to "national security." Government authorities seem to feel that their position is strong enough to take such a step without having to give an explanation. In fact, trying to explain would probably weaken their position.

Dom Paulo, in bringing the Gospel message of salvation to his listeners, had not hesitated to speak of political and economic liberty, of shared decision-making, of full human promotion in the spirit of *Populorum Progressio* and Medellin, i.e., of the whole man and of all men. At present the Churches, Protestant and Catholic, are joining to celebrate in a special way the 25th anniversary of the Universal Statement of the Rights of Man, to which Brazil is a signatory!

On several occasions since he became Archbishop of São Paulo, Dom Paulo has clashed with the authorities, particularly on the subject of torture and the nefarious activities of such para-military and para-police groups as the "Death Squadron." None of these has as yet been brought to justice. His predecessor, Cardinal Rossi, had shown himself a good friend to the government before he was "moved upstairs" in 1970 to head the Roman Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith. Within a week of his succession Dom Paulo firmly condemned the arrest and torture of a priest and social worker in a poor bairro. A growing number of bishops (estimated at 25 percent of the 250-strong CNBB) who are openly opposed to the methods of the regime look to him and to Dom Helder as their leaders.

On March 31st, 1974, Brazil will "celebrate" the tenth anniversary of the "Revolution"—a military coup aimed supposedly at "saving the country for democracy." In those ten years the regime has succeeded in alienating all the major groups whose collaboration is usually considered essential in a democracy: the press (censored), the judiciary (browbeaten), politicians (turned into rubber stamps or revolutionaries), industrial workers (exploited), rural workers (starved), students (silenced), intellectuals (frustrated or in exile). Their only real supporters are the ten percent who are doing well out of Brazil's much-publicized "economic miracle"—industrialists, business men, shareholders (mostly foreigners), latifundarios and corrupt policemen. Guerrilla groups have been crushed. The only group with an independent organization and a chance to criticize and be heard is within the Catholic Church. So the regime is quietly but efficiently taking steps to silence that group too, especially its major spokesmen. In the meantime a U.S.-based publicity organization has been given the task, in Brazil and abroad, of improving the image of Brazil (identified, of course, in the best totalitarian tradition, with the present regime).

The immediate task of the Archdiocese of São Paulo is two-fold: to find jobs for the 50 functionaries of Radio Nove de Julho and to find the 100,000 dollars "indemnization" which the law requires them to pay to their "dismissed" employees! The more long-term task is to continue to "preach the word, in season and out of season," as Dom Paulo's letter to his people entitled "A Word About a Silence" concluded: "Let us remain united in hope since 'the Word of God cannot be tied down.'"

(This article was written by a resident of Brazil who must for obvious reasons remain anonymous.)

COMING: An article by Peter J. Ognibene on Pentagon spies at the White House.

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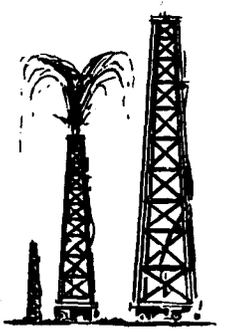
ENERGY: END OF AN ERA?

MICHAEL KENNEDY



Is a return to the old status quo possible?

For a historian, the last few months have been fascinating. The power arrangements that have shaped our lives since 1945, and the lives of everyone in the non-Communist world, are suddenly disintegrating before our eyes. Every day the newspapers announce more changes. First the price of oil is raised, and then raised again, and the era of cheap energy for the Western industrial nations quickly ends. Next one reads about secret discussions being held between the ministers of other commodity-producing nations. Washington issues long, reasoned appeals for understanding and mutual tolerance, but no one seems to pay much attention.

What is particularly interesting is the suddenness with which everything is happening. The American authorities are surprised by some unpleasant new event almost every day. I suppose that somewhere in the back corridors of the State Department or the Pentagon were people who foresaw much of what was going to happen, but if so, their warnings went unheeded.

Again and again during the past six weeks, I found myself remembering what I had read about the French Revolution. Looking back at the Revolution from almost two hundred years later, one can see its coming presaged in half a hundred different ways. Sometimes one almost shakes one's head in amazement. Omens of disaster were glaring all around them: how could they have been so blind, how could they not have seen what was coming? But as we all know, Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette saw only what they wanted to see. They could not imagine that the world would ever change and that they would cease to be the favored children of heaven. Even after the Revolution had begun, and royal authority had all but collapsed, they persisted in thinking that all this unpleasantness was only temporary, that somehow history would turn around and everything would be all right. The elaborate etiquette of Versailles, the ritualistic hunts and promenades and meals that controlled the lives of the royal family and the courtiers, continued until the very night that the mob came out from Paris.

I don't think I ever fully appreciated the force of social inertia, of the tendency of people and institutions to continue doing what they've always done, blindly, endlessly, until the Arab states started their oil boycott. It's been impossible for our political leaders to pretend that a crisis didn't exist. I think it's accurate to say, however, that almost to a man, they have attempted to minimize it. Mr. Nixon, for example, has suggested several times that a return to something like the international status quo as it was before the oil boycott is possible.

One would be tempted to call most of the President's proposals in this area almost criminally inadequate, if it were not for the fact that the program of the Congressional leaders is essentially the same. Mr. Nixon has asked for a ten-billion dollar energy research program; they want a twenty-billion dollar program. The President wants to push research in atomic energy; the Congressional leaders favor this, but they also want to spend a lot of money on more dams. There are other points of difference: the President opposes gasoline rationing, while the Congress apparently will favor it, but in the largest sense, their approaches to the energy problem are similar. Both the President and the Congress assume that the United States government can restore the

MICHAEL KENNEDY *teaches American Civilization and Sociology at the New York State Maritime College.*

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system of economic and political relations that existed in the world until the late fall of 1973. A crash energy program, some economic concessions, a few deft diplomatic turns, and all will be well again.

The Arab oil boycott of 1973, however, marked the end of an age. It apparently will take a while before the politicians of the Western countries clearly understand what has happened. Even many of our commentators, who as a group are less wedded to the status quo than the politicians, are having trouble understanding that the script of the international play has suddenly been changed, and that all the actors are going to have to learn new lines. They continue to be amazed that the Arabs could plan and execute the oil boycott; the Arabs were just Middle Easterners after all, lazy, incapable Levantines.

There are many reasons for the Arab states' recent successes. Soviet military equipment, a new generation of Arab leaders, and the adroit diplomacy of King Faisal all contributed to the November victories. One element in the equation, however, that is almost never mentioned is the American failure in Vietnam.

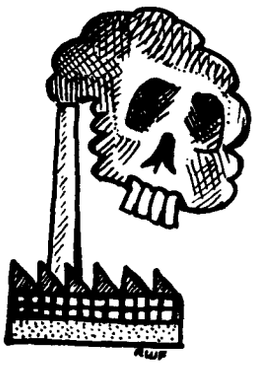
What, after all, are the lessons of Vietnam? The United States of America, the most powerful country in the history of the world was unable to control the politics of a small Asian state. The United States succeeded in keeping any other country from dominating the area. The American government could not, however, make the people think as we wanted them to think. Even if we had occupied the countryside, we would not have succeeded in persuading the people to willingly do what we wanted. Our retreat from Vietnam was a signal to the whole world that Western colonialism was dead.

The United States government could seize the Arabs' oilwells, or at least seize some of them, but it almost certainly could not protect the wells from saboteurs. Vietnam made it clear to intelligent politicians all over the world that whenever a colonial people wishes to break free, and is willing to suffer the consequences, the colonial power cannot stop them. The local people may not win completely, they may not gain control of their country, but they will be able to keep the colonial power from exploiting them in any significant way. In other words, since Vietnam, compromise with non-Western governments is a political necessity for the Western powers.

Very little of this is understood in the United States, where the energy crisis is usually discussed in very parochial terms. Usually it's assumed that in a few months some sort of compromise will be worked out between Israel and the Arab governments, oil shipments will be resumed, and everything will be back to normal.

While in the past few weeks a number of newspapers and politicians have been looking more closely at the part played by the big oil companies in bringing on the current fuel-oil and gasoline shortages, even these investigations are taking place within the traditional intellectual framework. It's becoming obvious that the November and December oil and gasoline shortages happened too fast. There was enough oil and gasoline in storage in November to have enabled the United States to maintain its normal rate of consumption for several months. The impact of the Arab oil boycott should not have been felt, in theory, until March, at the very earliest. Yet as soon as the boycott was announced, the shortages began. The newspapers made matters worse by publishing long articles about freezing homes and drivers stranded along the highway. Congress panicked, and passed the Alaska Pipeline Bill.

What does it all mean? Was there a deliberate conspiracy on the part of the oil companies to reap windfall profits? or, as seems more likely, did they just take advantage of a confused situation? Did the oil companies feel threatened by the anti-pollution movement? Most of the major coal fields in this country are either owned by



oil companies or are under lease to them; any relaxation of the anti-pollution laws would obviously benefit the oil companies. Was this an element in the situation? Similarly, if the government does launch a huge drive to make the United States self-sufficient in energy resources, the major oil companies, which own not only the coalfields, but most of the oil-bearing shale, would benefit substantially. Mr. Nixon and his aides issued contradictory statements, week after week. Were they trying to help the oil companies? or were they trying to help themselves, by trying to create a panic that would draw the public's attention away from the Watergate scandals? or were they simply confused, like everyone else?

I would suggest that there may have been a number of little conspiracies, businessmen and politicians trying to make some money quickly, or gain some advantage, but that there was no One Big Conspiracy. The worlds of business and politics are simply too far apart. They may mesh uneasily at election time, when contributions change hands, but most of the time businessmen and politicians deal with one another cautiously and warily. They may need each other, but they are rarely friends. The Great Oil Panic of 1973 would best be viewed, I think, as just one more episode in the checkered history of American capitalism.

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But it would be a mistake to swing around completely, as a few people are starting to do, and say that the energy crisis was just a temporary affair, more the result of confusion than anything more serious. The political world has changed, and it is not going to change back. The weak nations have discovered that they are strong in some ways, and the great powers have been exposed as surprisingly weak. No matter what happens in the Middle East in 1974, the lessons of the oil boycott will not be forgotten.

Even if the Arab countries begin selling oil, large amounts of oil to the United States again, the federal government will undoubtedly start some kind of energy research program. It will almost certainly be both vast and expensive. Whether it will bring about the results Mr. Nixon promises, self-sufficiency in energy at the end of a decade, is another question. Many scientists and engineers consider these proposals grossly inadequate. The programs that will be considered by the Congress early in this year vary in detail, but are essentially all the same. They envisage a great expansion of nuclear energy, extensive exploitation of offshore oil reserves and the great coal beds that underlie large parts of the American West, and some research into solar energy and geothermal energy.

The model for these programs, of course, is the Manhattan Project. Then the government spent two billion dollars and got the atom bomb. The problems created by the energy crisis, however, will not be solved by crash programs into reactor design. A lot of research also needs to be done on ways to more effectively utilize the so-called more conventional forms of energy. The principal agencies and corporations that government administrators will be working with, however, are not very likely to be rich sources of new technologies. The coal industry, the oil industry, the electric power industry, even the nuclear power industry are all, sociologically speaking, 'old' industries. That is, they are firmly established industries; vast amounts of capital have been invested in particular kinds of equipment; and men rise by following standard procedures. It is not surprising that most of the new work that has been done in developing innovative techniques in coal combustion since World War II has been done in Britain, France and Germany, despite their much more limited resources. Most government researchers are not free, either, to look at energy problems from a totally detached perspective. The federal agencies they work for are deeply influenced, in their ideas of what is 'realistic' and 'possible' by the industries they supposedly regulate.

What is needed, if the government's energy program is to develop long-range energy alternatives, is to set up independent energy institutes, where men who are not dependent upon the good will of the various energy industries, can study and plan. The gas-turbine engine, for example, has been studied by the American auto companies; I think it is fair, though, to say that the auto companies have never wanted to find merit in this type of engine, and so, of course, they haven't. Similarly, there has never been, nor does it appear likely that there will be, any sustained large-scale effort by the federal government to develop solar energy.

Innovation, though, is exactly what the President and the Congress do not want. The unexpressed hope lurking behind these proposed programs is that somehow, enough traditional energy sources can be found or developed, that the politicians will not find it necessary to make drastic changes, either in the structure of the energy industries or in the society at large.

So, what is likely to happen in the next ten years? Where will we all be in 1984? It's reasonable to expect that the government's energy program will be partially successful. Suppose too—another reasonable assumption—that the price of oil and of other raw materials essential for modern industry will also continue to rise through the decade, as the nations that produce basic commodities succeed in raising their prices. In the United States the practice is to pass almost all the cost of such increases on to the consumer. This means that millions of people will be able to buy fewer appliances; they will take fewer trips; and in general, have considerably less money to spend. Several million people will probably be laid off, some for months or years. Will these people, their expectations of a life filled with suburban splendors disappointed, rise in anger against the system?

It doesn't seem very likely. As Michael Harrington pointed out, modern poverty is invisible. The depression of the 1930s affected everyone. But the recessions of the 1960s touched only parts of the population. Some people were miserably poor, or couldn't get jobs for a year and a half, while millions of others were doing very well. A decade-long depression, caused by shortages of energy and raw materials would affect the country in the same way.

Before there can be a revolution, or even a major reform movement, there must be a sense of common misery. The fragmented poverty of modern America, however, does not provide this. One of the most amazing revelations to come out of the Watergate scandals is the fact that many members of the Nixon Administration genuinely feared that there might be a revolution. Who was to rise, one wonders, and against what?

Life in the immediate future is not going to be apocalyptic; it's just going to be gray and dismal. Not only will there be a recession, but our lives will be much more circumscribed than they've been in the past. There have to be a lot of regulations, if the government's energy programs are to work. Many more inspectors, file clerks, and cops will be appointed. There may well be unfortunate political changes. All sorts of repressive political activities can be justified because of the energy crisis; the passage of the Alaska Pipeline Bill and the

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calls for a lowering of our not very high environmental protection standards are merely a hint of the backward-looking legislation that we may expect will be proposed. Unfortunately, idealists almost always underestimate the staying power of established institutions. Such a retrogressive society could probably last for decades without collapsing.

Is this future inevitable? No, but immense difficulties stand in the way of averting it. The energy crisis could be seen as an opportunity, as a chance to attack the policy of economic growth and the population problem. Given the political pressures of our legislators, it is not likely that they would ever do this. Our high rate of economic growth, for example, doesn't happen by chance; laws are passed that promote and encourage growth. Highways are built, tax reductions are granted; and the end result is more cancerous growth. Hundreds of thousands of jobs depend, however, upon these laws continuing in force; to change them would be very, very hard.

Probably the only group in America capable of forcing the government to make drastic reforms, such as reducing the population, over a fifty-year period, from two hundred million to one hundred million, are the owners and managers of America's great corporations. Historically these men have mostly held aloof from politics and politicians; their immediate interests, moreover, obviously point in the direction of maintaining the highly profitable status quo. In the longer view, however, their interest lies in the other way. Great changes are needed, if the United States is to survive for many years as a successful capitalist society or indeed, as a functioning society of any kind. But whether our leading capitalists will understand this need, or if they understand, act, is questionable.

AMERICA AS MONASTERY

EUGENE BIANCHI

The role of psychic celibacy in keeping women at arm's length

After spending twenty years of my life in the Jesuit Order of the Catholic Church, I thought I knew something about celibacy. But I found out how confined and inadequate my notion of celibacy was when I resigned from the clergy and experienced marriage and sex in our culture. For a long time, I thought that celibacy was a prerogative unique to the Catholic clergy and sisterhoods. Now I realize that celibacy is deeply rooted in our society at large.

Does this sound preposterous in the age of Hugh Hefner, the pill and permissiveness? Maybe it will help if I distinguish between physical and psychic celibacy. The physical celibate renounces sexual contact with the opposite sex or with another of one's own sex. Rules for Catholic religious professionals still insist on this kind of celibacy, although the post-Vatican Council II environment threatens old restrictions. But psychic celibacy consists in keeping women mentally and affectionally at arm's length. It is in fact the core dogma of our patriarchal era. Woman can be exalted as wife, virgin, mother or deprecated (and enjoyed) as temptress, playmate, whore. In whatever way this male projection works, woman is object, non-equal, manipulated, distanced. Such a world is profoundly celibate.

The church has certainly made a major contribution to psychic celibacy in western culture. Centuries of physical celibacy for priests and nuns succeeded in excluding the feminine factor from higher ecclesiastical decision-making. The rejection of physical sexuality tended to corroborate the distancing of woman from the zone of intellect and spirituality. Physical celibacy has also harmed affectional growth for many church professionals, although some have developed warm and loving personalities without sexual relations. Yet even in church circles where traditional celibacy has been abandoned, the psychic mode prevails. The higher up the ladder one goes in Protestant hierarchies, the scarcer women become. Deliberation and decision at the top take place in a male lodge where the cultural myths of masculinity reign supreme.

From earliest times, churchmen have not regarded woman as full person and equal companion. Christianity began in a culture pervaded by dualistic male projection: body and woman means bad; mind and man means good. Wherever two or three (read men) were gathered together, the gospel tells us, God and church were present. Reread the ninth and tenth commandments about coveting a neighbor's wife and property. Woman, classified among things, was not a fit subject for friendship which called for equality of human condition. In Paul's perspective, woman was mainly an impediment to mission, except perhaps for certain of her ancillary functions. In cultivating its psychic celibacy, Christianity

EUGENE BIANCHI *teaches in the Department of Religion at Emory University in Georgia.*

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said a resounding "no" to homosexual affection, and it proclaimed an equally loud "no" to women as anything more than animate possessions.

Psychic Celibacy

This condition of psychic celibacy mirrored in the church is magnified in every dimension of our society. Boys are reared to join associations of males that in both fact and intent exclude females. The principal orientation of masculine identity is toward competition and success in a world of men. At their points of wide-ranging influence, government, business and the professions are ruled by nearly all-male groups. Watergate provides a perfect example of the masculine-only phenomenon in the highest reaches of state. When a woman finally appears in the long line of conspirators, she is a secretary who fails to properly operate a tape recorder. Big-time football manifests in cultural microcosm the celibate domain where men compete with rationalized brutality for gain and status. Self-valuation as a man-person depends on how well he performs against other men.

Woman's place is one of enforced psychic celibacy. She is not encountered as a contributing equal to men in occupational and civic life. When she is admitted to the executive and professional planes, she needs to prove her rationality at every step against the ingrained prejudices about female instability among her male colleagues. On the level of mind and decision in the public sphere, there is little or no intercourse between men and women. In this realm, our performance and profit society is as celibate as a Trappist monastery. Unwritten but very real "Cloister" signs hang outside the board rooms, menacing excommunication (subtle and crass discriminations) for trespassing.

I would have expected a relaxation of psychic celibacy in domestic and recreational activities of life. But even here woman's role is ancillary and compensatory; it is usually not one of mutual exchange among equally sharing persons. As wife and mother, she tends the hearth in order to free men to build their egos in a community of male peers. Women as wives, daughters, sisters, lovers are the working nuns of America; they clear a way and a time for their high priests to attend to sacred priorities. The woman, widowed by weekend TV football, is a symptom of the psychic celibacy syndrome. That many women refuse to recognize their situation is not surprising; having internalized the system, they find derivative self-worth by imitation of the master class and enjoyment of material pacifiers.

When men turn to women for sexual relief from the tensions of the job grind, it is often done as an act with a subordinate rather than as a relationship with a cherished equal. Cheerleaders, bunnies and broads of all varieties are strictly sideline diversions to help the boys return refreshed to the all-male playing field. Physical sex in our culture is performed in an atmosphere of psychic celibacy. Sex needs to be compartmentalized and controlled in the male mentality lest its offshoots of tenderness and warm concern distract them from making it in the competitive arena of peers. A growing number of women are giving up on men as partners for loving relationships beyond the sex act.

Two presuppositions underlie this vision of a psychicly celibate country. First, it is harmful all around. Secondly, women at this stage in history have developed virtues that are desperately needed to counterbalance qualities drummed into males. Survival of the species and of the earth will depend on a new interplay of masculine and feminine perspectives. That the regnant world of the male club is destructive needs little proof. When unchecked, the tough qualities of aggressive competition and manipulative, technological rationality lead to Theodore Roszak's "wargasm" at home and abroad. The culminating image of contemporary maleness is the Pentagon, America's model monastery on the Potomac. There the crusaders are ever poised for the next holy war.

To my mind, it is largely fruitless to argue whether the best of feminine qualities stem from nature or from nurture. Whether natural or the result of socialization (the probable answer), the traits of compassion, intuition, cooperation, unifying acceptance of nature and people have been far more cultivated among women. This feminine dimension is latent but stunted in most men today, especially among those who rise to commanding positions in a milieu where toughness is paramount. Our national environment of psychic celibacy stimulates the destructiveness, personal and social, of these unbalanced proclivities.

America as militant monastery needs to reflect on a spiritual-psychic transformation as its second centenary approaches. Unless the third century becomes more androgynous at every level, our soul-celibate chieftains will surely lead us to Armageddon.

WILLIAM HARROLD

FATHER

Mornings seem full of destruction.
Dew on the hawk's beak turns to blood.
Then his waving hands of geese break the day.
Yesterday he walked me through an Eden of trout,
slipping me some seeds for starting a garden.
The bees, flown home, are decoding
his messages of honey. His memory
reaches the nebulae of sunken space craft.
Look! He just snapped on the stars.

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THE BANALITY OF GOOD

THE SCREEN

The trouble with me, I'm beginning to realize, is that all I expect to see in a movie theater is a movie. I'm not the right audience for a phenomenon. I lack a certain credulousness that's needed. When *The Exorcist*'s twelve-year old heroine Regan (Linda Blair) levitates four feet above her bed, possessed by demons, I can't stop myself from noticing that the piano wires quiver with strain in the shadows. Got no soul, I guess. Clearly, though, most of the people flocking to *The Exorcist* pay those piano wires no attention. All over the country the film has caused movie-goers to lose their grip on reality. People have been so afflicted by terror that they threw up or fainted, and priests from Denver to New Jersey report being sought out by those the film has deranged. It all makes me wonder whether I ought to review *The Exorcist* or try to exorcise it.

I suppose that, having earned the testimonial implied by such a strong public reaction to the film, director William Friedkin should be given his due. He has tried something which, however unimaginative it may be, is still difficult, and apparently he has succeeded. The difficulty of making this film was that in it the line between naturalism and supernaturalism has to be, like those piano wires, hard to see. The audience has to be gulled into accepting the latter as if it were the former. In this regard, the keystone of the film is not any of those scenes where Regan is actually being exorcised, spewing bile and growling blasphemies, but much earlier when doctors think her fits result from a brain lesion. In scenes where her brain is being X-rayed, Friedkin depicts with documentary explicitness the injection and insertion into her neck of probes for a spinal tap. As she cringes with pain, enormous machines lurch and clank with a mechanical vengeance more horrific than anything unseen spirits have done to her so far.

It's at this point, I suspect, that Friedkin gets the audience in his power, perhaps more completely than he ever expected or wanted to. These scenes are so graphically done that they dispose the audience to be a bit queasy—they "prepare" for what's coming in a sense—but there's more to their effectiveness than just a gut reaction. On the X-ray table Regan seems a type of some fundamental modern condition in man. Her position at the hands of reassuring doctors is more helpless and terrifying than the fate of the prisoner in Kafka's penal colony. The effect is that the leap from the agonies of modern medicine to those of ancient religion becomes, in the mind of the audience, more than just believable: it becomes desirable, and that is what enables Friedkin to make it. When goodness must be experienced with such intense pain as Regan's to oppose an evil whose very existence is in doubt—indeed the X-rays do not turn up any brain damage—life becomes unbearable. It's enough to make you nostalgic for the Devil.

Thus Friedkin has been a Dr. Frankenstein of sorts. His own accomplishment is purely a technical one. He has tinkered with the lighting on his main set, a townhouse, until it is low and luxurious, and shades off almost imperceptibly into something murky and sinister near the ceilings, where the demons moan and scratch. He has in effect shaded off everything that he can get us to take at face value, and that way he has hoped we will take the rest too. Yet the scenes detailing Regan's possession aren't any cleverer than the chase in *The French Connection*, which they closely resemble in editing and pacing. What is the source of this film's power? It is as if, once Friedkin had created the film, it took on a life of its own. He has gotten his audience to accept something that affects people profoundly, but what?

In the end it isn't Regan but the exorcist himself whom the demons take possession of. Actually there are two exorcists, Father Karras (Jason Miller) and Father Merrin (Max von Sydow). Karras is a young psychiatrist filled with guilt about having neglected his dying mother and with doubt about his vocation as a priest. Merrin is an old man, an archaeologist, whom we have seen only one other time, at the film's beginning when he finds at a dig in Iran a Zoroastrian talisman together with, inexplicably, a Christian medal. But we have seen the talisman since then, near where a man fell out Regan's window to his death, and now we see the medal again around Karras' neck.

Since both priests die in the attempt to exorcise Regan, the implication is that everything that has happened was fated, and fated with prescience by Satan himself. The possession of Regan only ends when Karras momentarily loses control, screaming in exasperation, "Take me instead! Take me!" He at once blanches the same ashen color as Regan, and as she finally returns to her senses he is hurled through her window to his death. The revelation at hand would seem to be that Regan never was anything more than a decoy, a baited trap. It was Karras the demons were after all along, and they got him.

The Catholic Conference's Division of Film and Broadcasting has rated this film A-4, which means that it is not morally objectionable but may "confuse or offend" some people. This surprises me somewhat because Karras' final succumbing to the demons seems a gesture that affirms the power of evil in the total absence of good. It is Karras' desperate escape from the maddening dis-ease of apostasy. Nothing has happened that restores his faith in God, but Regan's possession at least confirms the existence of the Devil. In

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a choice between apostasy and damnation, the only choice he has, Karras chooses damnation. His death has to be seen in such religious terms too, not in humanistic ones, because his scant relationships with Regan and Father Merrin don't provide sufficient motive for what he does. If he couldn't bring himself to some humane response when his mother was dying, we can't believe he does so now out of compassion for virtual strangers. No, it isn't for love of man that Karras acts any more than it is for love of God. In the end he hasn't found anything he can sacrifice himself for, but only something he can sacrifice himself to.

The vanquishing hero of this movie, then, is the Devil. Among the people who freak out at the film, a great many are reportedly lapsed Catholics, apostates who, I would presume, identify with Karras. The logical conclusion to draw is that they also sympathize with the way out that he takes. Many of these people are the ones who seek out a priest, claiming that they too are possessed and want exorcism. But I can't help suspecting it is just an absolute certainty like exorcism's failure that they really hope to achieve. Whatever the case, this doesn't exactly suggest a sanguine prospect for the Church. Contrary to the Catholic Conference's fears, these people haven't been confused by *The Exorcist* in the least. They have understood the film all too well—have understood it almost instinctively, it would seem. Perhaps it really is exorcising that the film demands rather than reviewing.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

BOOKS

WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY, JR., ALCHEMIST

ROBERT LEKACHMAN

Four Reforms

WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY, JR.

Putnam's, $4.95

On the wine-bibber's O-7 vintage rating scale, this is an indifferent offering, at most a 3. Swirled and sniffed in the glass of contemplation, the words lack bouquet. On tasting, this conservative fermentation gives unmistakable signs of aging poorly in the bottle. Fair is fair. From time to time flashes of the old Buckley insolence light the page. The baroque vocabulary does not cease to amaze. Where save in the writings of our hero is one regaled with words like prescind, etiolated, decoct, anfractuosity, eristic, and thaumaturgic? I can't believe that either friend or foe will be content with these small helpings of old delights.

As a student of welfare and taxation Buckley is manifestly uncomfortable with the masses of data he offers in evidence. Some mistakes are trivial: a possible increase in subway fares from 15¢ to 60¢ is a 300 per cent not 400 per cent leap, and quite bad enough when correctly stated. Some errors are more substantial: when median family income approaches $12,000, it is highly implausible that "91 per cent of all taxable income is in brackets of less than $10,000." Other lapses are conceptually disastrous: the author's laborious "proof" that poor states subsidize rich ones is based upon examination of federal grants-in-aid to cities and states. If the Pentagon's far from inconsiderable spending were included, Buckley would have been comforted by the size of the funds flowing to poor southern states in abiding testimonial to the political clout of southern Senators and Congressmen. I don't know who subsidizes whom but one certainly can't derive the answer from Buckley. Again, although Buckley cites valuable tax research by Joseph Pechman and his Brookings colleagues, he oversimplifies their findings, to put the matter courteously, when he flatly asserts that the rich bear heavier tax burdens than the middle class. It may be that, innocently he focuses upon rates imposed upon adjusted gross income. It is axiomatic that the main function of skilled tax professionals is so to shelter the income of their clients as to reduce adjusted gross income to the most modest amount legally possible.

This sort of thing is bound to shake one's confidence in Mr. Buckley as a guide through the quantitative jungles. I fear that worse must yet be said. Serious conservatives respect the complexity of institutional arrangements and gaze skeptically upon simple schemes advertised as improvements of existing arrangements. Yet all four of Buckley's reforms amount to magical (dare I say thaumaturgic?) remedies for appallingly complex and chronic social ailments. Welfare, says Buckley, is too expensive. The thing to do then is limit federal aid to those states whose per capita income falls below the national average, a neat exclusion of New York and California which harbor the largest welfare clienteles. Almost frivolously neglected are the reasons for migration of the poor to the cities, evidence that most of the welfare population are too unskilled and uneducated to be employable, and signs that of the remainder work would gladly be performed if only jobs were available. Since welfare recipients like the rest of us are citizens of the United States as well as of a given state, there seems to be no valid reason to define their plight as merely local. The problem is national.

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As with welfare, so with crime. Reciting familiar comparisons between the speed and certainty of British justice and sluggishness and uncertainty of our own system, Buckley seeks heroically to cut assorted Gordian knots by repeal of the Fifth Amendment. In this dreamy account, the flaws in the American criminal justice system apparently do not include venal policemen, judicial hacks, politically ambitious prosecutors, and archaic attempts to punish private vice. Criminal justice falters and malefactors escape punishment because ideology-drunk judges foolishly extend Fifth Amendment guarantees to all sorts of miscreants. Solution? "The Fifth Amendment (as currently interpreted) should be repealed. Procedures should adapt to the criterion: Did he do it? Procedures should adapt to the goal of speedier justice." It is odd how little attention this conservative pays to the evolution of the Fifth Amendment and how lightly this anti-statist contemplates the vast expansion of governmental authority over individuals implicit in repeal of constitutional guarantees.

Rather more can be said in favor of Buckley's other two proposals Liberals as well as conservatives have been sufficiently depressed by the flagrant inequities and insane confusions of the federal income tax to be tempted by the notion of a flat rate imposed upon *all* income including capital gains. Of course if the political will existed, progressive rates could also be applied to personal income simply defined. Still, in the existing political climate, a flat rate on all income might actually increase the taxes paid by the affluent.

Buckley concludes by excoriating the idiocy of the Supreme Court interpretations of the First Amendment which absolutely forbid support to religious schools. Once more the remedy of choice is a constitutional amendment: "No child shall be denied admission to a public school, by the United States or by any State, on account of race, creed, color, or national origin notwithstanding any provision in the Constitution of the United States or of any State. Nor shall any relief authorized by any legislature for children attending nonpublic schcools be denied by virtue of any provision in the Constitution of the United States or of any State."

I must report a sneaking sympathy these days with the frustration of parents who prefer sectarian to public schools. I wish that the Supreme Court read the establishment clause a trifle more sympathetically and that a little money might find its way, directly or indirectly, to hard-pressed parents. Support to religious education strikes me as one of those uncomfortable issues which has diminished in practical but not in emotional or constitutional importance. This said, I suppose I should find myself on the side of the ACLU when confronted by Buckley's constitutional amendment.

I have no doubt said enough to convey my judgment that *Four Reforms* is the mixture as many times before. Is the comparatively temperate tone of Buckley's polemic a sign that its author is aging? Is the equally mild nature of my own reaction an indication that the reviewer also is mellowing with age? He who reads may judge.

The Remaking of the Church

RICHARD P. McBRIEN

Harper & Row, $6.95

JORDAN BISHOP

"A great part of the Christian life of ordinary Christians is developed first of all, at least in fact, outside the official and juridical life of the Church and its supervision." Karl Rahner wrote the above in the bad old days before the Council, in the context of a defense of the individual agaihst what he saw to be a dahger of the "collectivization" of the spiritual life. For Rahner, this was not only a statement of fact; this was the way things should be.

Perhaps one could not honestly maintain that this is the way things always were in the Church characterized by the author as working on theory and practice "A." Few of us would want to go back to this theory and thi practice. Nevertheless, caricature is o little help, and in his presentation o a typology of theory and practice be fore the Council, Richard McBrie has indulged in a fairly heavy-hande caricature. It may be doubted whethe in fact "the Catholic community of th 1940s and 1950s was a relatively peace ful one" (p. 23), even in the Unitec States, and even given the validatior of the practices of that Church by ar underlying theory of the Church. If one moves back to the nineteenth century and earlier, the caricature becomes even more apparent. The groundwork for the second Vatican Council was begun as much by Lamennais, Buchez, Möller and Newman as by Rahner, de Lubac, Congar and Chenu. And it should be noted that de Lubac's *Méditation sur l'Eglise* (1952) is as much a product of the pre-Conciliar Church as Salaverri's textbook.

The typology appears to concentrate, in its critique of a "monarchical" model of paternalistic authority, on a very American preoccupation with something like personnel management; theory and practice "C", that of the post-Conciliar Church, must work along the lines of "participative management" (p. 84). This option may exaggerate the need for management, as the whole book may exaggerate the need for concerted and organized action.

There is a real difference between the celebration of freedom within limits imposed by authority—not uncommon under theory and practice "A"—and the subordination of freedom to authority, even the authority of a democratic community, which can easily result when Church leadership is thought of in terms of management of any kind. The old Church did indeed build high fences, but paternalistic authorities may have been less concerned with what people did inside them than personnel managers are concerned with how people live without them. And while the fences functioned in theory, in practice the supposedly closed, inward-looking community was not very well insulated.

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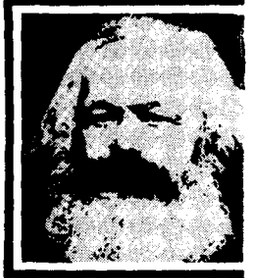
There was also a very important gap between theory and practice that existed then as now. To a considerable extent the real tyranny existed as much in the power of an anonymous bureaucracy as in the absolute monarchy of the theories. The author does not really come to grips with this, and it will not go away with the adoption of a constitutional model of authority. One can have real doubts about the efficacy of constitutional reform if one is committed to an institution that will, in one way or another, dispose of large sums of money and planned organizational structures, manned by people preoccupied with "efficiency." The real power in most constitutional democracies lies with the bureaucracy. Democratically-elected leaders, to be sure, are supposed to make major policy decisions. But in the long run, deputy ministers are probably more important than ministers. Here in Canada their salaries are almost double those of the ministers.

The author's recommendations with respect to ecclesiastical courts raise two questions. Since the Middle Ages ecclesiastical courts have been occupied with marriage cases to the near-exclusion of almost everything else. Much of this was demanded because of the problems of legitimacy, inheritance and the like, with respect to which ecclesiastical decisions are now quite irrelevant. "Internal forum" decisions should be quite enough for marriage cases; if the Church is to have courts at all, their main function should be with the defense of people vis-à-vis the bureaucracy. Given that problem, the institution of ombudsmen might be more important than courts.

Throughout the book the author insists on one very basic point: the Church is not identified with the Kingdom. This identification was probably the most pernicious heresy of "theory A," and many of the institutional changes suggested spring from this, or are made possible by the fact that the Church cannot be so identified. One might prefer anarchist models to those of bourgeois democracy; they appear to this writer to be closer to

"I believe in Jesus Christ... I am indebted to Karl Marx."



Since its publication in Spain, this passionate testament of faith has created a wave of dissent and controversy. It also brought about the author's immediate dismissal from the faculty of the Gregorian University in Rome, his suspension from the Jesuit Order, and his exile to a small village outside Madrid. But in arguing that an openness to Marxist principles is the key to making the Church he loves truly Christian, Father Diez-Alegría has issued an important challenge. I BELIEVE IN HOPE will force every Christian to re-examine the validity of the assumptions, on which he has been taught to live. $5.95

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the New Testament experience. There is also a danger in making any utopia too detailed. It then all too easily becomes simply the substitution of one ideology for another.

Reviewing this very American book, this writer is at a disadvantage in that he has not lived in the United States since 1953. The polarization, the gap between theory and practice, may indeed reach dangerously "schizophrenic" levels. Yet one might ask whether it involves nothing more than a healthy pluralism, painful at times, but ultimately no more destructive than many divisions the Church has faced in her history. This should be especially true for those who are engaged in the search for "theory C"; a theory that is still developing out of the often real —not "apparent"—contradictions of theory B: the Council itself. If Trent was in effect a beginning rather than an end, how can we expect Vatican II to be different?

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JOHN GARDNER

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RONALD DE FEO

John Gardner's latest novel comes to us elegantly packaged. With a lovely rusty-brown illustration covering the jacket, similarly lovely and colored illustrations inside, and a title page on which we find the initials J. G. impressively displayed, the book looks like one of the volumes in the Great Illustrated Classics series or the elaborately produced Folio Society series of classics. Obviously Knopf thinks very highly of Gardner; not even John Updike's work receives this sort of instant-classic treatment. Regrettably, though, *Nickel Mountain* doesn't measure up to its wrapping.

The previous Gardner novels I've read—*The Wreckage of Agathon*, *Grendel* and *The Sunlight Dialogues*—were interesting (particularly from a technical standpoint) and, in some instances, engrossing; but they all had a disturbing bloated quality. For one thing, Gardner's language never seemed to let up. Sheriff Clumly of *The Sunlight Dialogues* couldn't simply wince; he had to wince "as if he bit into a lemon." A hare-brained idea just couldn't come to Clumly; a "shiver" of it had to travel up his back. A room wasn't merely silent and comfortable, it was "silent and comfortable haunted by no turbulence but the breath of his [Clumly's] nostrils and the nostrils of his wife." In addition to the inflated, often awkward, prose, the reader had to contend with the author's incessant preaching. Gardner has been called a "philosophical novelist," and to some extent he is, if by the term one simply means a novelist who explores various ideas and concepts. All well and good. We appreciate such exploration. But too often in these three novels Gardner's ideas were merely recorded, not dramatized, with the result that the "characters" became mouthpieces for the author, and the ideas, presented with little or no subtlety, seemed pedestrian and obvious. No wonder the reader grew weary of Grendel's terribly stylized ranting and raving, Agathon's contrived meditations on freedom, and the Sunlight Man's all-too-perfectly calculated, at-the-drop-of-a-hat speeches on freedom, irrationality, order, and assorted subjects. Gardner seemed to be an incurable preacher. Only in a John Gardner novel would you find a dragon saying: "The essence of life is to be found in the frustrations of established order." Even in his epic poem, *Jason and Medea*, an eminently forgettable volume, he was determined to deliver ideas, even if they appeared ludicrous ("How, that is, does an astral apogee come to know more about upright action than a vertical line or the loudest possible physical thump?").

The reader of *Nickel Mountain*, then, is relieved to discover that in this "pastoral novel" (Gardner's term) the author has dispensed with blatant philosophizing and has toned down his language. (Whether this represents a genuinely new style is questionable, however: one critic implied that the "new" novel is actually an old one which Gardner dusted off and revised. But literary gossip aside.) Gardner has a relatively simple story to tell here and he tells it simply, using very traditional —one is almost tempted to say old-fashioned—narrative techniques. A nice feature of *The Sunlight Dialogues* was its rendering of small-town life, the little details and observations that defined both the town of Batavia and its people. The reader felt that if Gardner had eliminated his pretentious mythological allusions, trimmed his tedious discussions of law and order, and tried to breathe a little more life into his potentially vivid characters, he would have had a much more successful novel. Theoretically, *Nickel Mountain* should be a fine book, the kind of straight, unpretentious novel of character and environment we hoped Gardner might write for a change of pace. Sadly enough, it reveals that although the

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author does have a gift for describing rural life—in this case, a small Catskill community of the nineteen-fifties—he doesn't have much talent for creating characters or for sustaining sufficient interest in them.

Gardner's protagonist is Henry Soames, the owner of a diner in a remote section of western New York. A fat, inarticulate, lonely man, Henry has remained an observer of life rather than a participant in it, and has nothing much to do now but wait for death. One day he marries his teen-age waitress, pregnant by a young man who went off to college, and their relationship, difficult and trying at first, grows tender and binding. As Gardner tells the story of these two innocents, who manage to survive the precariousness of life, its sudden, absurd changes, he describes their various acquaintances, who expand, influence, at times even threaten, their lives, and he traces cycles of birth, death and rebirth. Gardner makes much of the chance occurrences in life, the way men accept or reject them, make peace with themselves and their unexpected universe or become frustrated and intolerant, defeated by perverse twists of fate. But although his ideas are compelling and, for much of the time at least, subtly developed, the characters used to convey those ideas, to represent and act them out, are all too solemn and thin, and we eventually tire of them. Henry, for example, possesses a certain quiet, simple dignity, as do a number of the other characters, but after a while we could do with a little less dignity and a little more complexity and shading. We aren't asking for a different Henry, but rather for a deeper, truer one. Callie remains a particularly thin creation who fades into the background while other, less important characters are allowed to dominate the foreground. We are puzzled by her—why exactly does she marry Henry, was it essential for her to do so, why does she remain with him?

Gardner struggles valiantly against creating stereotypes by having his characters underplay their hackneyed roles, but they emerge as familiar types nonetheless—the sensitive, unappreciated fat man; the haunted religious fanatic; the reflective old man; the poor, sweet young thing. In the end, the author even conveys his ideas in a simplistic fashion. Henry, we are told, "felt like a man who'd been born again, made into something entirely new . . ." This summation, after some three-hundred pages, is a let-down. And that is an understatement.

Gardner may have been attempting to "modernize" the pastoral form. But what he has created is simply a traditional novel that doesn't succeed in traditional terms. The dust-jacket notes claim that *Nickel Mountain* is warm and moving, but these are exactly the traditional virtues that the book so badly lacks. The characters fail to touch us and involve us because they haven't been fully realized and because what often happens to them recalls events in second-rate fiction and drama. When, in the local hospital, Henry sees Callie's newly born child for the first time and says, "He's beautiful. Holy Jesus," with tears running down his cheeks, we are supposed to be affected by his sense of participation and wonder. Instead, we feel vaguely embarrassed, for the moment is too familiar and Henry is too much of a stock figure.

John Gardner has indeed come down to earth in this novel, but, unfortunately, he seemed more comfortable in his own special realm, the one populated, in part, by intensely philosophical prisoners and dragons.

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

REVIEWERS

ROBERT LEKACHMAN is Distinguished Professor of Economics at Herbert H. Lehman College in New York City. A Guggenheim Fellow, 1972-73, and contributor to *Dissent, New Leader, Commentary* and other journals, he is the author of several books, most recently, *Inflation: The Permanent Problem of Boom and Bust* (Random House).

JORDAN BISHOP is the author of *Cristianismo radical y marxismo* (Mexico, 1970) and an associate editor of the *Cape Breton Post* in Nova Scotia.

RONALD DE FEO contributes to *The National Review, The Nation* and other journals.

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CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 523)

Public Broadcasting has served religion well in introducing the religious public to little known and seemingly strange expressions of religion in "Religious America." It is too bad that Mr. Murray, with empathy, could not share in depth those religious experiences about which he writes so slightingly. Apparently Philip Garvin, producer of the series, did. Hence the effectiveness of what he has produced.

WALTER HOUSTON CLARK
Andover Newton Theological School

Reply

I hope that my review did not suggest that I disapprove of non-rational and passionate religious experience. Of course religion is fundamentally an "experience." But I hope it is one which not only offers comfort to the believer but also directs him back to his world, where he may be better able to live informed by its creative energy.

My point was that the TV series, "Religious America," takes certain religious experiences at face value and as remarkable in themselves, without examining how they affect the lives of the participants. I am sure that Dr. Clark is correct in stating that Pentecostal churches and religious communes, as well as many traditional churches, have an impact on the lives of those involved. But to what degree? What sort of impact? This is exactly what we want to know. The filmmakers simply don't ask the question.

My view is that people's religious experiences, on TV or otherwise, are reflected in their non-churchly activities. We have today a surfeit of self-proclaimed ecstacy—or possession by devils—but not nearly enough love and justice. I think "Religious America" has missed an opportunity to investigate the constructive power of those authentic spiritual experiences which are indeed in our midst and contribute to our collective well-being. Instead the series reverently records the clichés c contemporary "spirituality" and actuall seems to celebrate the truly desiccatin myth that the person who thinks h is in direct contact with God is re lieved from worrying about the mixe up mess that the rest of us have to dea with.

MICHAEL MURRA

Dismissing Eliot

San Francisco, Ca

To the Editors: By now other reader have no doubt dealt with the centra arguments of "Poetry and Survival' [Dec. 21], but let me add this particula protest against its confusions: the mis reading and dismissal of Eliot at the beginning of the argument. Theological is not the right word for the ending to *The Waste Land* and neither is the ending imposed. It grows right out of the imagery and form of this poem of fragments. The shiftings of visionary desire and ironic defeat are felt even beyond the enigmatic closing. As for theme, didn't Eliot himself later deny that the poem centered on the social and the political; for him at any rate it did not express the disillusionment of a generation. More objectionable was Mr. True's assured judgment that the later poems—presumably "The Hollow Men," the *Ariel* poems, "Ash Wednesday," and the *Four Quarters*—"quickly run to fat," or more astonishingly, that they "only connect nothing with nothing"! And do I understand him correctly that we fell into a second World War through Eliotic evasions, "by forcing a theologically conservative pattern" upon our century's problems! At the very least the *Four Quartets* have a sustained intellectual complexity, nuance, and intensity which no prose could sustain, certainly not Mr. True's prose. Students find the struggle to express in words a mystical experience and reality of great current interest.

One other point: if anthologies are to testify to "the new poetry," let me name for *Commonweal* readers two widely distributed ones. *Poetry of the 'Underground' in Britain* (Penguin, 1969,) is crammed full of bad confrontative and protest verse; *Quickly Aging*

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ere (Doubleday Anchor, 1969) shows cely the dangers of celebrating the ir- itional and the ephemeral and the diffi- ilty of separating good from trivial in ich an esthetic context.

DAVID DERUS

Reply

I am sorry that Mr. Derus found Poetry and Survival" confusing—my ıtention was simply to emphasize the act that a poem, even a great poem ke *The Waste Land,* can outlive its use- ulness and that, as a reader, I am eeply indebted to a number of con- emporary poets who have written about ecent social, political, and psycho- ogical questions in a way that Eliot, or various reasons, did not.

Mr. Derus' other observations call or closer and more careful attention han I can give them here, except to nention that the two anthologies he ecommends represent "the new poetry" ıt its weakest, and that neither of them ncludes any of the poets discussed in 'Poetry and Survival." For an accurate representation of the best in recent poetry, readers may wish to look at three inexpensive and thoughtfully ed- ited anthologies: *Contemporary Amer- ican Poetry,* ed. Donald Hall, 2nd ed. rev. (Penguin Books, 1972, $1.50); *Naked Poetry: Recent American Poetry in Open Forms* (Bobs-Merrill Co., 1969, $2.95); and *The Contemporary American Poets,* ed. Mark Strand (Mentor Books, 1969, $1.50).

MICHAEL TRUE

Biblical Associates

Washington, D.C.

To the Editors: I was grateful for the sympathetic treatment of the Catholic Biblical Association's letter to the Bish- ops in your editorial "A Future The- ology" [Dec. 28], and found its assess- ment of the situation perceptive. It was especially welcome because the journals in question have conspired to present the CBA letter as an attempt to sup- press legitimate criticism. Ignoring the vast dialogue going on in the Church today, the give and take on every level in countless ways, they would like to pretend that Catholic scholars have to be urged to "enter into honest contro- versy"—a duty they can discharge only by responding to the distorted attacks made in the pages of these journals. It was largely because of this misrepre- sentation that I felt compelled to with- draw the offer of a CBA series to be published in the *Register.* Yet Dale Francis, while giving his version of why I had withdrawn the offer (Nov. 18th and Nov. 25th), refused to publish the open letter in which I explained these things, a letter sent with the request that it be published "intact and in its entirety in the next issue of the *Reg- ister.*"

I would, however, like to underline one aspect of the CBA letter to the Bishops which has generally been neg- lected in the discussion of it. The CBA resolution quoted in the letter contains the phrase "they reaffirm their grateful devotion to the See of Peter for this [i.e., for *Divino Afflante Spiritu*] and many other signs of its interest in and support of the dedicated labors of so many loyal sons and daughters of the Church further to open up the treas- ures of God's Word." This controversy within the Catholic Church has helped many of us realize how grateful we should be for the Magisterium. Too often people think of the teaching au- thority in terms of restrictions and ad- monitions. It is worth noting that in *Divino Afflante Spiritu,* Catholic Scrip- ture scholars have been given very en- lightened guidelines for interpretation of Scripture to which they can point for justification against opponents of literary-historical criticism. It is pre- cisely the rejection of the legitimacy of scholarly method which has precipitated the present crises in some non-Catholic church groups.

(REV.) JOSEPH JENSEN,O.S.B.
Executive Sec'y.
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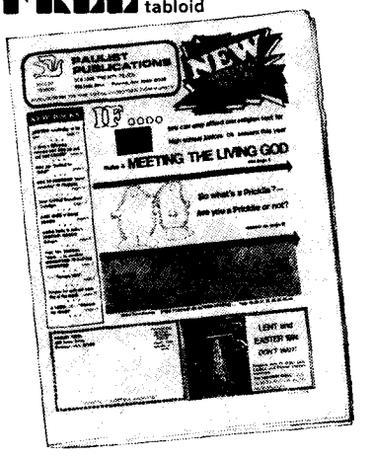

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